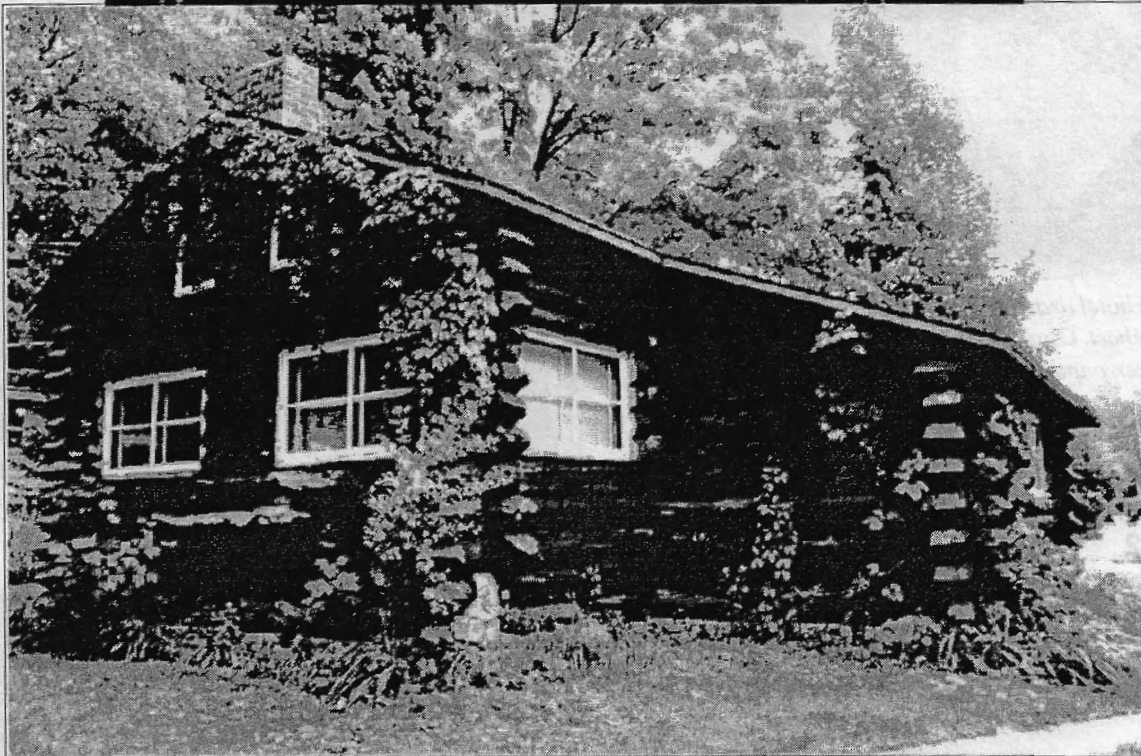


PRAIRIE

Popular and Progressive American and World Architecture, 1880-1930

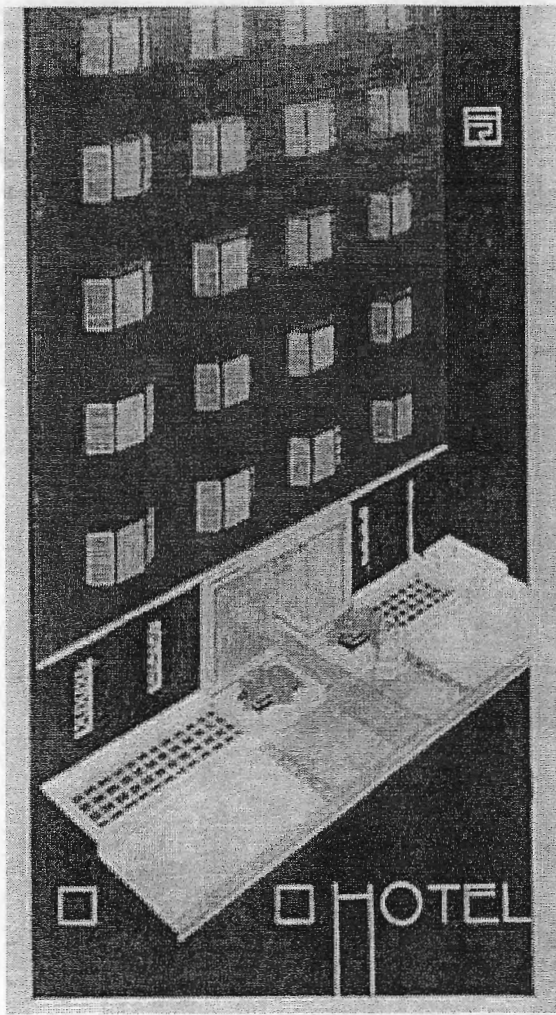
Incorporating Geo. W. Maher Quarterly

JOHNSON, OF THE NINTH,
By WILLIAM ELLIS.

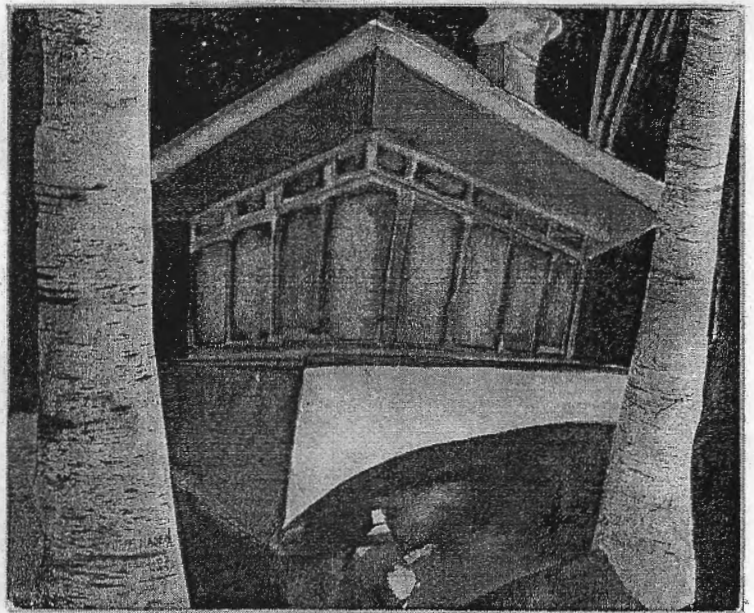


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Art: Philosopher Press log cabin, a publication
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Schindler hotel drawing, 1915. For Ottenheimer Stern Reichert. Gouache, black ink and graphite on wove-screen paper. Page 10.



New Seth Peterson Cottage painting. Page 18.



Quincy Mine prize at St. Louis world's fair of 1904. P. 7.

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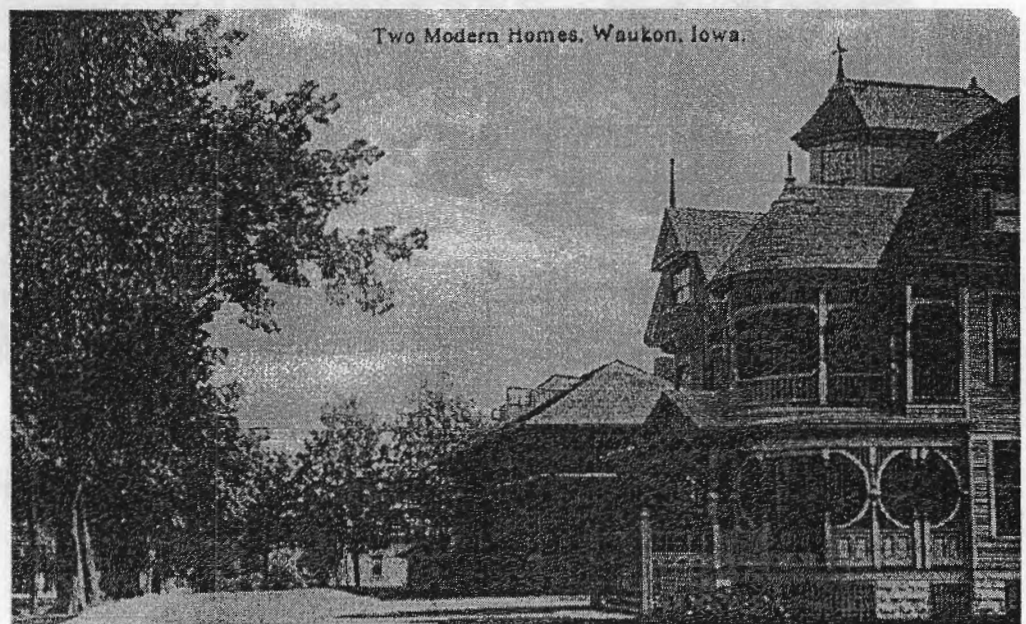
Mary Jane White
"Growing into It—
the O.J. Hager
House"

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Wright's
neighborhood

Back pages Maher
Quarterly

Right, vintage postcard with
Spencer's O.J. and Ella
Hager House, low roof at
center. Page 12. Lowe-
Laiblin collection.



Prairie life

Autumn on the Dakota Prairie is a dusty life. Even just a few years ago, autumn'd smell in the air, and I'd want to be on the road (from South Wisconsin) to South Dakota. Just thinking about Dakota alters my grammar. Before moving away forever at age 18, I was ambivalent about the whole wide-open place, which seemed to me on the other side, the very edge of civilization. After all, South Dakota's city, Sioux Falls, had no art museum. I didn't even visit an art museum until I was 19 or so and went to the one in Minneapolis. South Dakota didn't even celebrate its prairie artist, Harvey Dunn. Didn't even: Strange for a flat place.

See page 9. Kinship is felt by me for the Harris family moving from Dodgeville, Wisconsin, to the Upper Peninsula, then back to Dodgeville, then back to the U.P. Sounds fine to me. I do that, too, but just for traveling, though my plan is to buy a \$10,000 house in the U.P. and sit there looking across the Portage channel between Lake Superior and Lake Superior, west to east, vice versa.

Next issue. Prairie Central for me is Chicago. This issue, we're departing, mostly, from Chicago and its suburbs. They'll be back in our next issue, with Robert Spencer, Lawrence Buck, Robert Seyfarth, George and Philip Maher. Also Bentley's Fix House in Tomah, Wisconsin. & an update from Wright's neighborhood.

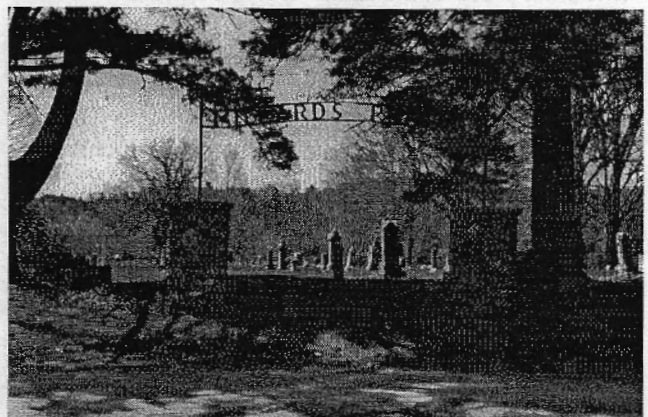
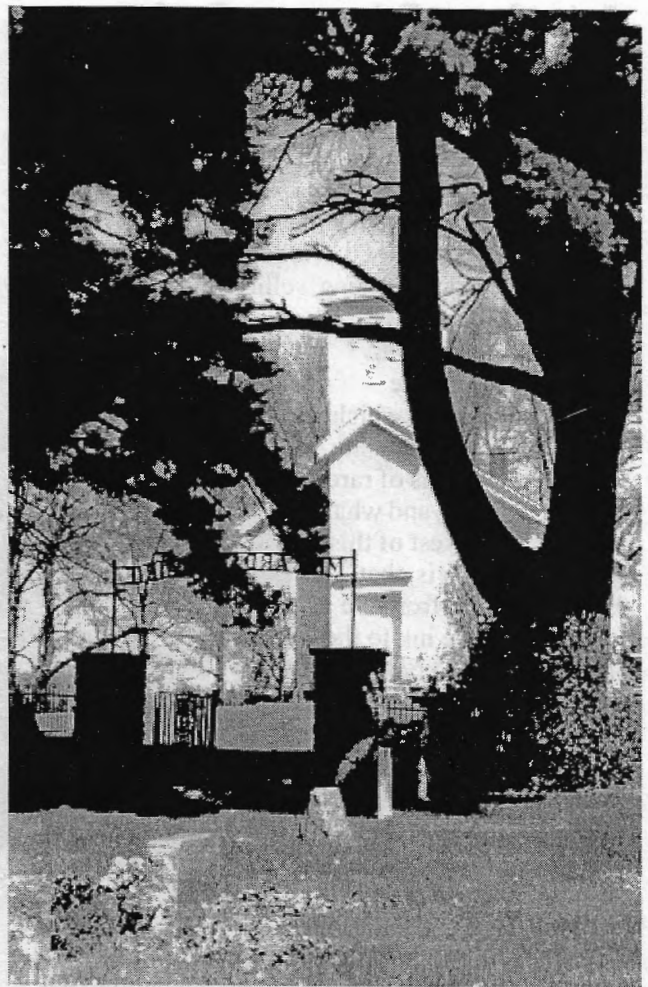
DMA

Millards Prairie

Some communities in the government-imposed Wisconsin T-intersection for Vernon, Monroe and Juneau counties used to be called prairies. Nearby Elroy, which was Fowler's Prairie, is the rural neighborhood called Millards Prairie named for an early white farmer and merchant family. One Millard was O.H., who moved from New York and various other

places to 80 acres in Whitestown Township in Vernon County in 1857. By 1884, this Willard owned 680 acres in the country and five blocks in the Village of Ontario where he was postmaster and sold general goods. Other than mostly neat farms, Millards Prairie has a countrified Gothic-style United Brethren church dating to the 1870s and the cemetery across County Road W. A historian wrote in 1884 that part of the church was in Vernon County and part in Juneau County. The United Brethren were pietists; they were like simplicity-adoring Methodists but more so. This prairie could be Millards Plain.

Sources.
Ancestry.com.
History of Vernon County, Wisconsin, Union Publishing Company, Springfield, Illinois, 1884, 1975 reprinting, collection of Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison.



At the Sign of the Green Pine Tree

by Allen J. Post

"To the casual person, the pinewoods of northern Wisconsin as a basis of worldly operation suggest nothing beyond the buying, selling and manufacture of lumber. Yet here, 'At the Sign of the Green Pine Tree,' is a little printing shop, from which are being issued exquisite handmade editions of rare English classics; and what adds to the interest of this unique situation is, that the entire labor, from the spreading of the ink to the preparing of the book for the binder, is done by a woman. The business was hardly well on its feet when Mrs. Van Vechten, who is, by the way, a college bred woman of unusual culture, volunteered to go into the office and look after the bookkeeping and correspondence of the firm, thereby giving her husband more time to bestow upon the lumber interest in which she was also engaged. Mrs. Van Vechten watched the process of bookmaking with great interest, and threw herself heart and soul into a study of the subject. It soon transpired that upon all matter of margins, arrangements, color, etc., her taste was fine and discriminating. Early in her career as a bookmaker, Mrs. Van Vechten proved her right to a foremost place in the rank." *Delia T. Davies; "Book-making in the West" in The Critic.*

Women bookmakers were apparent in the nineteenth century, but remained yet scarce in the latter 1890s when Davies' article appeared. Mrs. Van Vechten's achievement is downplayed by mere "fine and discriminating" taste. She solved a printing problem which plagued The Philosopher Press and all others; that of registry. Philip V. O. Van Vechten, her husband, and William H. Ellis, a printer and writer, had been unable to precisely align the type on the recto and verso of deckled-edged paper. Helen Bruneau Van Vechten took charge. Feeding the sheets first

from right to left, and then, after reversing the sheet, feeding same left to right, Mrs. Van Vechten achieved perfect registry. This seemingly simplistic resolution was noteworthy and eventually subscribed to by printers far and wide.

Helen Bruneau Van Vechten was born Helen Gilbert on May 20, 1868. The paternal Gilbert died at the young age of 32 and Helen's mother remarried J. R.

Bruneau. They resided at Fifth and Grant streets. Helen married Philip Van Orden Van Vechten, of Milwaukee, a lumberman with artistic talents.

The Philosopher Press was formed by the newlywed Van Vechtens, William H. Ellis and Edgar T. Wheelock. Wheelock had purchased The Torch of Liberty, a weekly newspaper, which became the daily Wausau Record in 1895. Also a state

timber agent, Wheelock was appointed register of the U.S. Land Office in Wausau, by President McKinley, in 1897. Wheelock continued to contribute pieces to the monthly "The Philosopher," but was no longer a partner in the press after the premier issue in January 1897.

The Philosopher, a monthly literary magazine, was edited by Philip Van Vechten and William Ellis. Ellis was a printer by trade and a writer whose work appeared occasionally in Scribner's and the Saturday Evening Post. More importantly, perhaps, Ellis was a sort of self-proclaimed philosopher who contributed regular columns to the magazine under the heading "In the Smoking Room" and, for an interim during the second volume, under the less colorful heading, "Comments and Criticism."

The April, 1897 number of the magazine reflects Ellis' sometime-penchant for tongue-in-cheek humbleness, hosting the subheading; "Thoughtful, But Not Too Thoughtful." More often than not, however, Ellis is assertive if not brash in his opinions, as when he states in January, 1898; "I love the Egotist. True



Helen Van Vechten and staff upstairs at Third and Scott streets. Marathon County Historical Society.

Philosopher Press—log cabin in Wausau, Wisconsin

he seldom deceives any but himself, but the genuine Egotist is the one firm rock in a shifting sea."

The Philosopher hosted a cornucopia of original works. Local authors included Wheelock, William Chandler Parcher and Neal Brown, whose prose appears in the initial volume, while Laura Cooke Barker and Elia W. Peattie, among others, grace the leaves of poetry. Illuminations enhanced the text and Philip Van Vechten graced numerous pages of the magazine and published books with his illustrations. Local and nonlocal artists, including Gardner C. Teall, also contributed.

Local intellectuals who contributed to and set the tone of the monthly literary magazine included influential members of the legal and journalistic professions. Perusing the many issues of the magazine's nearly ten-year run, however, it is Ellis' regular column which consistently stands out. His opinions and philosophy touch on all facets of the intellectual and nonintellectual life. There is, indeed, a pomposity of tone which surfaces not infrequently, but also a depth of insight, if not wisdom, which often holds true today.

"But the world is full of psychological chemists who are constantly assaying the frauds..." Ellis writes in January of 1898, "...so that we shall not be unduly deceived. I say unduly with a full realization of the qualification. We ought to be deceived some—it is better for us, and better for the world."

Ellis might change his tune a bit if he were subject to the smoke and mirrors of modern politics and the contemporary media. But, then, he recognized a century ago "the daily press reeking with moral filth, the backyard gossip of every neighborhood filled with salacious diet, every street-corner foul with ribald jest, and national humor degenerating to a coarse jibe



Helen Van Vechten. Moline (IL) Dispatch, November 17, 1902.

on the misrelation of the sexes..." These the street-corners and neighborhoods of Wausau in 1898! Ellis continues, "...is it any wonder that a calm survey of the field as a whole makes one wonder where it will all end."

Perhaps, the more things change, the more they stay the same. "We live too fast to live well," Ellis muses a month later. "Let's slow up the pace and have more fun here, and, therefore, more peace hereafter." This, long before computers and fax machines; before even the ubiquitous automobile and telephone.

In July, 1899, Ellis again ponders philosophically and finds another, not altogether original but heartfelt, maxim; "There are only two ways to be happy—and if not happy why be at all. One is to have everything you want, and the other is to want nothing you can't have."

What Ellis seems to have wanted and, unfortunately, may not have fully gained, was a significant place in the canon of literature and letters. Frustration and anger seep into Ellis'

later columns and didacticism is mildly apparent throughout. In the final few years of *The Philosopher*, literary contributors shrink to nil and the monthly magazine becomes increasingly a product of Ellis' lone writing and editorship of reprintings. Then, *The Philosopher* evolves into an angry political tract, until its demise in 1908.

At its best, the magazine enjoyed a wide reputation and a circulation of nearly 1,300 subscribers. It offered a venue for local as well as broader-based contributors of poetry, fiction and essays. Ellis was one of the earliest publishers to recognize the merit of L. Frank Baum, celebrated author of *The Wizard of Oz*. The short story "A Shadow Cast Before" was published in *The Philosopher* in December of 1897.

Baum and Ellis apparently became cordial as Ellis presented Baum with the first copy of *The Philosopher* Press edition of Lewis Carroll's *The Hunting of the Snark*, June, 1897. The Carroll book included an introduction by Ellis and was decorated by Gardner C. Teall, a member of the Baum circle which also included W. W. Denslow; renowned for his illustrations of many Oz books. Only 99 copies of *The Hunting of the Snark* were printed; 81 copies in boards and 18 copies in hand-embroidered linen. Baum later reciprocated by presenting Ellis with his

Philosopher Press—log cabin in Wausau, Wisconsin

own privately printed book, by the Candelabra's Glare.

The Hunting of the Snark is one of the press' earliest book publications, though not the first. A small book honoring the union of Philip Van Vechten and Helen Bruneau was printed in 1896, but does not host The Philosopher Press imprint. Described as a "marriage song" in a number of sources, the book was likely very limited in number.

Wausau native Elia W. Peattie authored The Love of Caliban which was printed in 1897 and decorated by Philip V. O. Van Vechten and Gardner C. Teall, in an edition of 300 hardbound copies. The Philosopher Press' first year of publishing also included a collaboration by Ellis and William Leachman, entitled The Old Wisconsin; only five copies were privately printed in December for one Charles Allen Johnson, one on Japanese vellum paper bound in full crushed levant.

Robert Browning's Andrea Del Sarto appeared in November of 1897 in an edition of twenty copies for Roy U. Conger. Olof and Yourself by Forrest Crissey, A Strange Experiment by Laura Cooke Baker, Edmund Spenser's Epithalamium, and Rudyard Kipling's The Recessional were also issued in 1897.

Small presses of hand-crafted books proliferated at the end of the nineteenth century, in response to the machination of the printing process. Materials and techniques abandoned or streamlined by machine presses were returned to the printing room. While The Philosopher Press employed a commercial ink, it consistently printed on high-quality handmade paper, "for the most part on L. L. Brown and Dickinson papers." The type was imitative of William Morris and the Kelmscott Press, favoring aesthetic quality if lacking originality. Type design and type casting were important, as were the decorations found profusely and handsomely in Philosopher Press books.

Highlights in The Philosopher Press' twelve year duration include editions of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Jenny and Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Lord Walter's Wife (1899); John Keats' Odes and Robert Louis Stevenson's A Lodging for the Night (1900); Emerson's Self-Reliance and Fitzgerald's Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam (1901); Robert Browning's Rabbi Ben Ezra and Saul (1902 & 1903 respectively); Poe's Raven: Its Origin and Genesis by Henry E. Legler (1907) and Edgar Lee Masters' A Book of Verse (1908).

William H. Ellis authored Johnson, of the Ninth, a short, sardonic, political fiction which appeared in "The Saturday Evening Post" in 1901. The Philosopher Press published the story the same

year, as a booklet in dark green paper wraps. "Of this edition of Johnson, of the Ninth, two hundred and fifty copies were made for Mr. William J. Wagstaff, for presentation to his friends." Enclosed is a decorative card stating "A Merry Christmas From William J. Wagstaff." Given Ellis' penchant for wit and sarcasm, his authorship of the story, and the comical connotation of "Wagstaff," it is not unlikely that this little booklet was actually printed by Ellis as a holiday "wag" gift.

Ellis also apparently published, at least in part, a series of "numbers" entitled The Bachelor Book. An advertisement of October 1901 within "The Philosopher" magazine states; "The publication of The Bachelor Book has been suspended because it was so good nobody could keep up the gait. The seven numbers issued under the original editorship are put up in a volume handsomely bound in cloth, stamped in two colors and enclosed in a slide case. There is no more appropriate gift for bachelors and those who have been. A copy will be sent on approval to those who request. Price \$1.50." Ellis then lists the address of 1248 Third St., assumed to be his private residence. If actually distributed, the volume surely contains the acerbic humor endemic to its author.

The Philosopher Press relocated at the height of its duration in 1902, from its original location at the northeast corner of Third and Scott Streets, to a



New York American & Journal, December 7, 1902.

Philosopher Press—log cabin in Wausau, Wisconsin

freshly constructed log cabin. The log structure still stands at McClellan and Bellis streets; now a private residence and duly respected as such.

An article in the "New York American Journal" of December 7, 1902, describes "a little log cabin which deserves to be placed in a class all by itself. It is probably the most artistic and attractive log cabin in the world. It is the home of Mrs. V. O. Van Vechten, who once ornamented a brilliant social set in Milwaukee..." Photographs accompanying the article depict the "Green Pine Tree" sign hanging at the border of the property and shelves of books within the working study.

From the same article; "The cabin was constructed according to the designs prepared by Mrs. Van Vechten. She selected the site, drove in the stakes and turned the first shovelful of earth when the corner-log was laid. The cabin is built on the wing plan, in the form of a Greek cross. Its dimensions are 18x36. It is finished throughout in true log cabin style." One or two rooms were of course, set aside as a printing office. Whether space remained as the Van Vechten residence is debatable.

A sketch of the proposed log cabin, by J. H. Jeffers & Co., Architects, of Wausau, appeared in an advertisement when logs were "already on the ground for the work." "The building will be made in this form," said William Ellis, the guiding star of The Philosopher, 'for three reasons. First, because we haven't money enough to build any other kind, next because it will be easy to heat, and lastly because it is a good advertising feature.' The promotion continues, "The front is an office room and in it will be a large fireplace of sparkling quartz with hearthstone of Marathon granite."

The new cabin was financed in part by a special

lifetime subscription of "The Philosopher" offered for \$10 and limited to 150 subscribers. How many readers took up the offer is unknown, but those who did were likely disappointed as the magazine's quality eroded several years later and until its demise.

In 1902 a "little collection of the songs of the heart," by Frances Rosina Haswin was published. "Mrs. Haswin has touched a tender and intimate vein in which her verses are very pleasing," a catalogue advertisement informs. Some Songs and Verses "with cover design and title page by Charles Frederick Naegele.. being the first book completed in The Log Cabin Shop," the book's printing statement divulges, "finished the nineteenth day of July, MCMII."

This title was issued in 100 copies bound in full leather, signed by the author, as well as in an undisclosed number in handsomely decorated paper-covered boards, both printed on Old Stratford deckle-edged paper. It is exemplary of The Philosopher Press' finest work.

The press continued to print books until 1908. It had reached its apex, however, the year of its relocation, with some three dozen book titles and a five-year-plus monthly magazine run.


The log cabin featured a sitting porch as well as interior space for the gathering of Wausau's intellectuals, known among their own as "The Philosophers." Books, politics and art, as well as philosophy, predominated the discussions. Certainly it was a warm, inviting and lively venue for those engaged.

Publications by The Philosopher Press are today quite scarce. The Marathon County Historical Society houses a representative sampling of books and monthly magazines. The Wisconsin Historical Society Library in Madison maintains a more expansive, although rather delicate, collection, including a large run of The Philosopher magazines.

The duration of The Philosopher Press' existence should be stressed, over its eventual folding. It is noteworthy that the press flourished as long as it did, at a time when similar small presses were springing up across the country. A certain foresight by its creators deserves a nod as The Philosopher Press preceded a number of contemporary publishers of handmade books, many of whom struggled. The Philosopher Press stands as a culturally significant chapter in Wausau's history.

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- Fine Books Bought & Sold -
- Search Service -



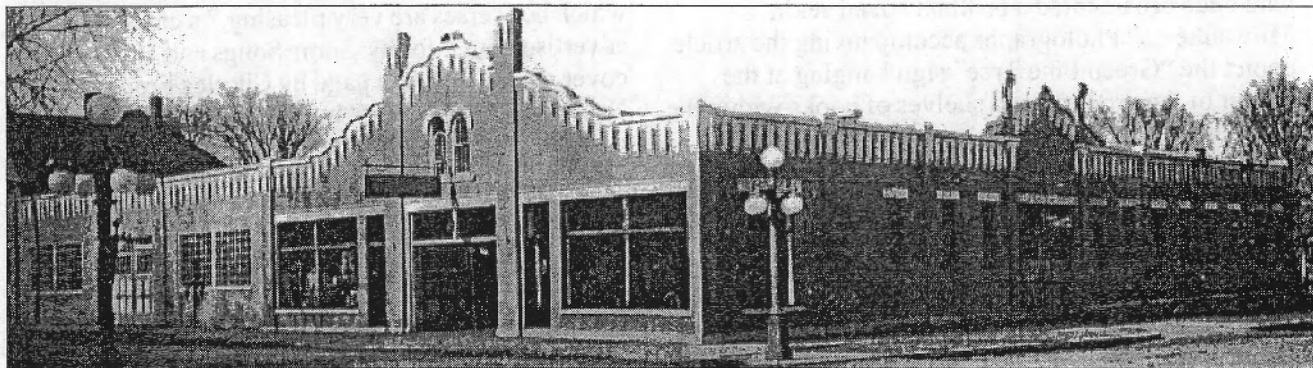
814 3rd Street
Wausau, WI 54403
(715) 849-BOOK

Since 1995

After Philosopher Press, architect J.H. Jeffers

Readers are encouraged to share any information about, or publications by, *The Philosopher Press*, including biographical data of its members and contributors, to add to the author's ongoing study. Contact Allen J. Post at *Et Al's Read & Unread Books*, 614 Third Street, Wausau, WI 54403, 715-849-2665.

Press people's activities in Wausau city directories 1902-20. The 1902 directory called the printers Van Vechten & Ellis, as did 1908. In 1910 the business was listed as the Log Cabin Print Shop, in 1914 as the Van Vechten Print Shop. In 1916 The Philosopher Press had a new owner, Edwin E. Steckel. DMA



Van Vechten's Wausau Motor Car Co. building on Third Street, Wausau (demolished). Wausau city directory, 1918.

After The Philosopher Press More about Van Vechtens, Ellis

By 1908, George Ellis moved to Chicago, as recorded in the Wausau city directory for that year.

Philip Van Vechten died about 1930, Helen in 1949 at 81. Besides *The Philosopher Press*, and likely to support the press, Philip was in 1902 and years after a bookkeeper for the National German-American Bank in Wausau. In 1914 Philip was a partner in the Reams Motor Car Co. and in 1916 the Wausau Motor Car Co., seller of Cadillac and Studebaker cars. These were going and prosperous concerns so he surely understood business. In later life Helen continued her literariness, serving on the public library board and being an active member of the Ladies Literary Club.

Helen Van Vechten had a connection to Chicago architect George W. Maher through her brother Charles whose colonial-style Wausau house at 904 Franklin Street was designed by Maher in 1894.

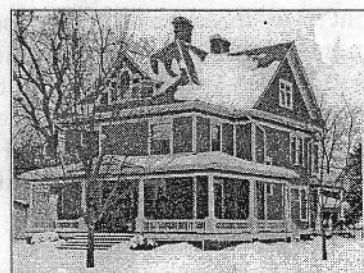
Edgar Wheelock, the partner who left after *The Philosopher's* first issue in 1897, moved to Milwaukee in 1901 to become chief editorial writer for the *Milwaukee Sentinel* newspaper.

Otherwise, I found various names for *The Philosopher*

Sources: "Mrs. P.V.O. Van Vechten Dies of Heart Attack," *Wausau Daily Record-Herald*, July 5, 1949. "Wheelock Funeral," *Marshfield (WI) News-Herald*, January 16, 1957. Wausau city directories. Marathon County Historical Society Library, Wausau.

J.H. Jeffers, architect

J. H. (Henry) Jeffers (c. 1865-?) worked in Central Wisconsin from the late 1890s to the early 1910s. After some years in Stevens Point, Wisconsin-born Jeffers moved to Wausau between 1902-04. His styles were the styles



Jeffers' Pomeroy House (1904), Amherst, Wisconsin. web

prevailing for the times: colonial and classical revival for houses, the Jensen House (1901), Stevens Point; Pomeroy House (1904), Amherst; classical for the Wausau Club (1901); and the picturesque log cabin for *The Philosopher Press*. Such cabins, emanating nostalgia for the recently passed white pioneer era, were being built throughout the Upper Midwest, New York state and elsewhere in the early 20th century. About Jeffers' cabin, a Wausau newspaper reported: "It will be built of Norway logs, peeled, and will be 18x36, with wings on each side 10x18. The finish will be like

woods cabins, the logs on the inside hewn to form the wall; the ceiling about eight feet high supported by hewn rafters; the windows single sash swinging out and cleated, strips doors with wooden latches." The New York American & Journal in a December 1902 feature (included here) about Helen Van Vechten and her cabin said that the front door's iron hinges were 40 years old and came from a Wausau blacksmith shop.

I have nothing much about Jeffers' personal background. Ames, Iowa architectural historian Wesley I. Shank didn't either in his Iowa's Historic Architects (1999). After, perhaps, some years in Aberdeen, South Dakota (where he is said to have to in 1906), Jeffers was in Mason City, Iowa, in 1912, and worked there with partners, first, apparently, Ursa L. Freed and then Einar Broaten, and then alone. Mason City is home to buildings and houses by Frank Lloyd Wright, and in the Rock Crest-Rock Glen development, Walter Burley Griffin and Barry Byrne, and a place with adventurous clients would have been attractive to an ambitious architect. With Broaten, Jeffers did the Garner (IA) Public Library (1915) and the Prairie style Boehmler House (c. 1915) in Hampton, Iowa. Shanks notes that Jeffers was a musician and conductor of the Mason City Municipal Band. My lone personal story of Jeffers is this, from the Emmetsburg (IA) Democrat of May 7, 1913, found on the web: "J.H. Jeffers, the well-known architect, was quite badly injured a few days ago at Lake Mills while inspecting a building. He lost his balance and fell from the scaffolding."
DMA

Sources: "A house full of history," Wendell Nelson, Stevens Point Journal, March 30, 1988. "How a Charming Artist Cottage Can Be Made of a Log Cabin, New York American & Journal, December 7, 1902. "Log Cabin," Wausau Pilot, February 25, 1902. Plainfield (WI) school dedication, Plainfield Sun, October 2, 1902. Pomeroy House, Amherst K12-local history, website, downloaded August 25, 2003. Wausau city census, 1905. Wausau Intensive Survey, Maryanne Norton, Mary Malaguti, City of Wausau, 1984. Marathon County Historical Society Library, Wausau.

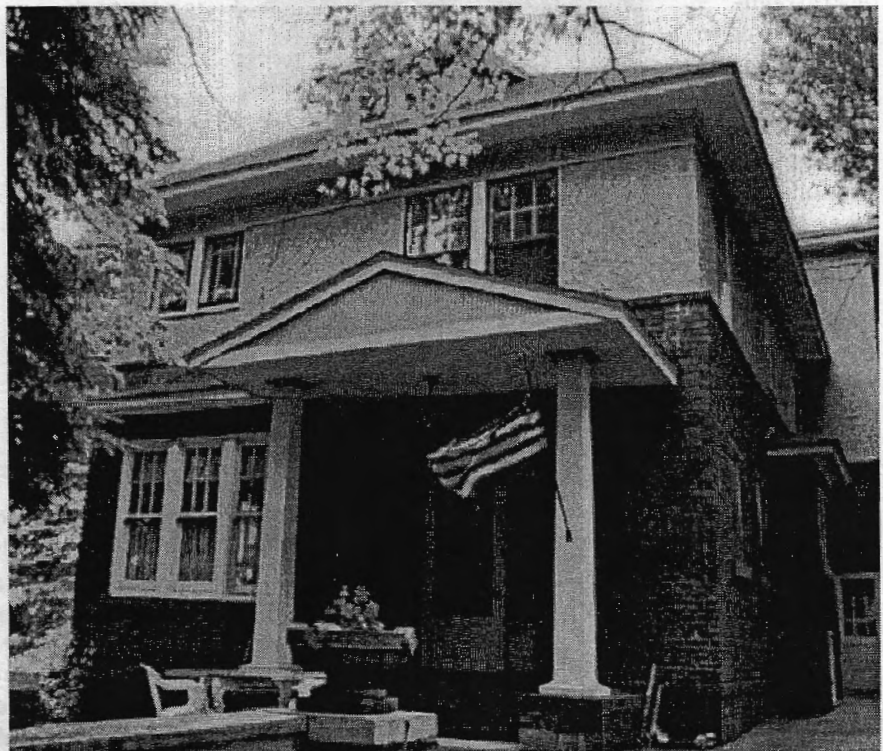
Ottenheimer in the U.P.

by Donald M. Aucutt

On a bluff above the Portage channel in Michigan's Upper Peninsula sits one of the farthest north examples of early 20th century progressive architecture. You see the place, the Harris House, prominently sited as befits a house built by two mine agents or superintendents of the Quincy Mining Company, from everywhere across the canal, also called Portage Lake, in Houghton. Once across the bridge to Hancock, the Harris House at 108 Center in Hancock recedes from sight because it's high up. One sees the squared Temple Jacob, and then, when driving, feels hurried along Front Street, past the Harris House, into downtown Hancock.



Captain Samuel Harris in 1900.. MTU/CCHC. Below, foursquare entrance to Harris House. dma



Harris House, Hancock, Michigan

Captain (as he and other copper mine managers were called) Samuel B. Harris superintended the Quincy mine from 1884-1902, and his son John followed him as agent from 1902-05. These two seem independent men, rather cantankerous. A history of the Quincy copper mine, notes that Captain Samuel was the only Cornwall-born miner to be the Quincy agent, and worked there effectively and was rewarded with a \$10,000 annual salary in 1897 and a lot for his house-to-be in Hancock, until the very early 1900s when the owners questioned his personnel decisions. Son John (Luther) followed. John finished with the first Michigan College of Mines (now Michigan Technological University) graduating class in 1888 and studied at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 1890-93. John, too, conflicted with the Quincy owners and was gone as the Quincy agent. John then superintended the Hancock mine for 15 years.

None of this Quincy conflict plays in John's or Captain Harris's obituaries in 1927. The son died first at 41 in January 1927, having been sick for a week and unresponsive to a Chicago specialist called to Hancock. The family plot card at Forest Hill cemetery lists his death cause as "acetanidili," or "acetanilide," an aniline-acetyl compound "used to allay fever or pain" (says my 1890 Webster's unabridged dictionary), in likely other words, over-medicated to death. In October 1927, Captain Harris, 93, died, as the Forest Hill plot card shows, from a urinary tract infection.

Captain Harris—let's call him Samuel—was born in Camborne, Cornwall, in 1834. "That particular section of England is noted for its many rich copper and tin mines, and most of its people become miners at an early age," his Houghton Daily Mining Gazette obituarist explained in 1927. At 19, Samuel came to the lead mines of Southwest Wisconsin. By 1864, he was permanently resident in the U.P., after having gotten his teacher's certificate, moved to the U.P., gone to Nova Scotia for a gold rush, returned to the

U.P., then to Dodgeville, Wisconsin, as a school principal. With him was his English-born wife Mary (1835-1900) and daughter Ellen (called Nellie) born in Dodgeville in 1860. By

1909, when the Harris House on Center was built, the Captain was a Republican, had been a supervisor for Quincy Township, a banker, a power company director, and so forth, and had two more children, John, already met, unmarried and rooming in the Exley Building, and James, an attorney (eventually to be found in Lansing), and buried his 65-year-old wife. He was boarding with his daughter Nellie at 204 Front (now 201 Cooper) with her husband, Charles Hanchette, and daughters in a house built in 1899. That house is next to the Harris House.

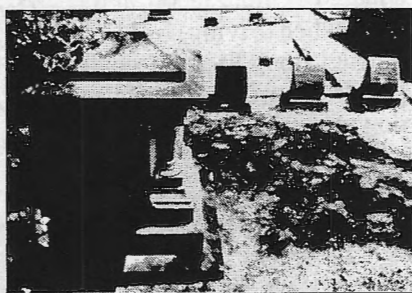
Enter Ottenheimer.

Henry L. (Leopold) Ottenheimer (1868-1919), a Chicago architect, a Jew, designed the Harris House. That a Jew would work in the U.P. makes sense.

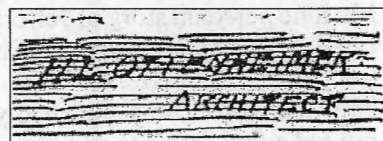
Though not mine owners, Jews, the Baers, Goetschells, Fields, Gartners, Wieders, did business, banking, garment and furniture merchanting, carriage making. Ottenheimer was designing for U.P. clients from around 1899. His colonial-style Reese House at 918 College Avenue, Houghton, was built in 1899-1900, as were his classical-style Shelden-Dee Block, 512-524 Shelden Avenue, and his Douglass House



John Harris, back second from left, in the first graduating class of the Michigan College of Mines, now Michigan Technological University, Houghton. MTU Archives/Copper Country Historical Collections.



Harris plot at Forest Hill. Rear right from left: John Luther Harris, his mother Mary, his father Captain Samuel. dma



Above, Ottenheimer's signature on a presentation drawing. Below, Ottenheimer advertisement in Houghton (MI) Daily Mining Gazette, 1899. MTU/CCHC.

Harris House, Hancock, Michigan

hotel, 517 Shelden, Houghton. The prospects of the burgeoning Keweenaw Peninsula, which comprises Houghton and Keweenaw counties with Houghton-Hancock and Calumet then prospering and dressing up, must have seemed excellent to Ottenheimer; he advertised regularly in the Daily Mining Gazette in 1899.

Born in Chicago, Ottenheimer went to public schools, and then to work for Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan—"the famous office of Adler & Sullivan," says the History of the Jews of Chicago. Adler was a Jew, Sullivan not. Ottenheimer studied, too, in Paris, and after returning opened his architectural office. From about 1892, he was partners with Henry J. Schlacks (1868-1938), who had also been with Adler and Sullivan and at MIT.

Harris plans. In June 1909, the date for Harris House plans still with the present owners, Ottenheimer was partners with Isaac S. Stern and William C. Reichert in Chicago. Because the plans are not initialed or



Ottenheimer Stern Reichert logo block on Harris House blueprints. Owner's collection, dma

otherwise signed, we cannot know with certainty that the Harris House was the work of Ottenheimer instead of Reichert or Stern. A story in the Daily Mining Gazette of August 29, 1909, which included a presentation drawing, said: "...Mr. Ottenheimer being long known in this part of the country for building the Douglass house, the Shelden-Dee block and other fine examples of architecture in Houghton."

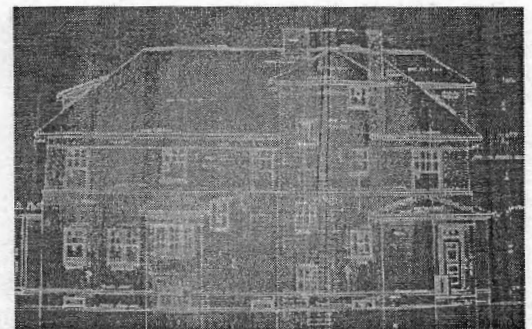
The house. The plans for a house of nearly 6,000 square feet were drawn for John Harris, but the Mining Gazette calls it the Captain Samuel Harris House. All the Gazette story is details not style. Details like: first- and second-floor living rooms with lake frontage; two distinct suites of bedrooms, baths on the second floor; servant rooms on the third floor; exterior of "oriental" brick on the first floor, "rough cement coating" on the second; hot water heating, vacuum cleaning system. The two second-floor suites are key to the sometimes-John, sometimes-Captain Samuel naming: the two men shared the house.

Amenities obviously being most important to newspaper writers, we'll describe the house as Prairie with a bit, a small bit, of colonial, and debts to Sullivan and George W. Maher.

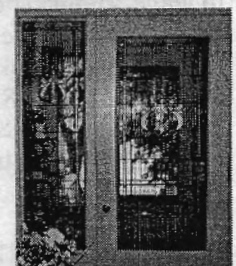
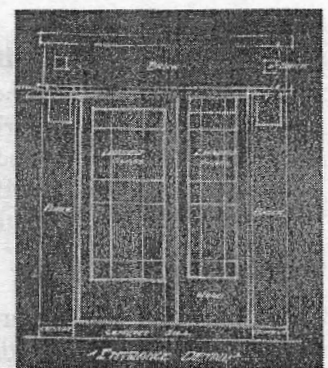
From the Center side, the house is a foursquare with a big Maheresque mass behind and a few squat dormers reminding of Maher's. Even with its stringcourses and banding, the house stands rather than sits, being more vertical than horizontal, and, thus, owes to the few residential designs of Louis Sullivan. Most of the windows are paned. Two windows, both in John's suite are leaded and camed in Prairie style.

John was living in the house by 1910. Two years later, Captain Samuel had moved from Nellie's to his suites. Later, Nellie lived in the house. She died there in January 1946 in deepest snowy winter.

Sources: Buildings of Michigan, Kathryn Eckert, Oxford University



Side view. Above, OSR blueprints. Below, realized. dma



Entrance art glass. Blueprint simplicity from outside. Finished with floral design from inside. dma

Harris House, Hancock, Michigan... Ottenheimer in Chicago

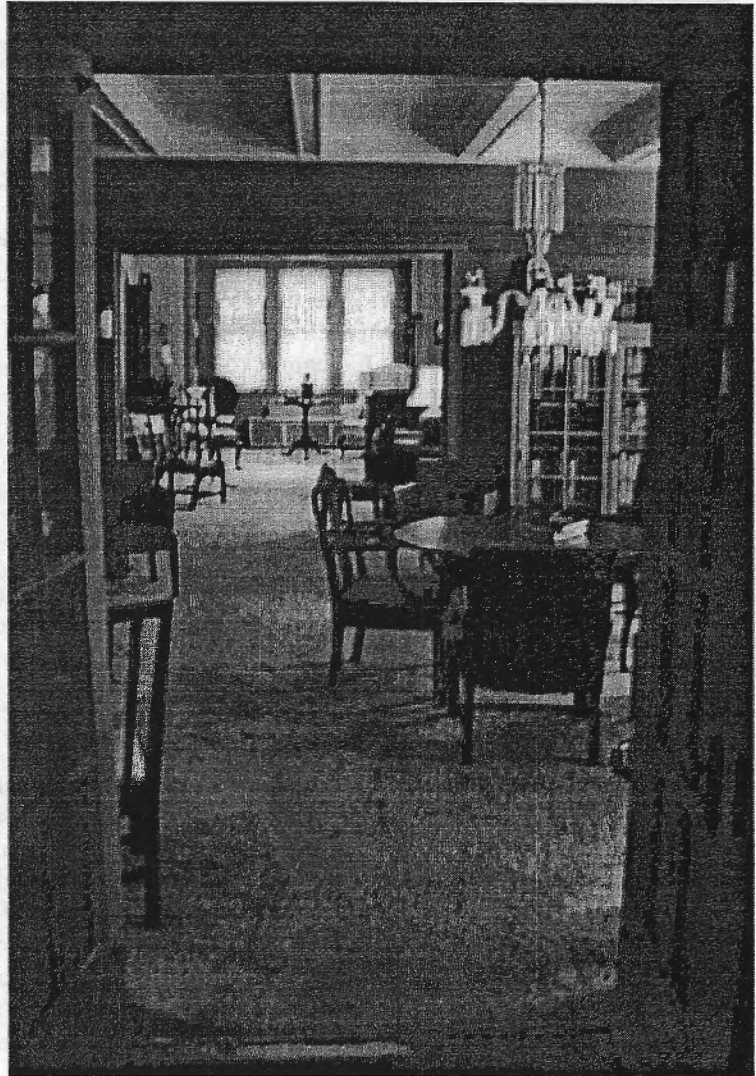
Press, New York, 1993. Chicago Churches and Synagogues, George Lane, Algimantas Kezys, Loyola University Press, Chicago, 1981. East Hancock Neighborhood Historic District nomination, Linnie Thuma, August 8, 1979; National Register of Historic Places, June 23, 1980. East Hancock Revisited, Eleanor A. Alexander, self-published, 1984, 1986. Harris obituaries, John Luther, January 1927; Captain Samuel, October 19, 1927; Ellen (Nellie) Hanchette, "Mrs. Hanchette Taken by Death Thursday Night," January 18, 1946, Houghton Daily Mining Gazette. History of the Jews of Chicago, Hyman L. Meites, editor, Chicago Jewish Historical Society and Wellington Publishing, Inc., Chicago, 1924, reprinted 1990. "New Residence of Capt. Samuel Harris," Houghton Daily Mining Gazette, August 29, 1909; newspaper collection, Houghton County Historical Society. Old Reliable, an Illustrated History of the Quincy Mining Company, Larry Lankton and Charles Hyde, Quincy Mine Hoist Association, Inc., Hancock, Michigan, 1982. Sullivan-esque, Ronald E. Schmidt, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Chicago, 2002. Copper Country Archives, Michigan Technological University, Houghton. City directories. MTU Archives/Copper Country Historical Collections, Michigan Technological University, Houghton.

Ottenheimer, his partners

Some of Henry Ottenheimer's life exists here already. He was married and in 1916 he and wife Mary were socially acceptable and, thus, in the Chicago Blue Book, as resident at 1107 Pratt Boulevard. A few important dates follow:

1914. Ottenheimer and partners convinced the young Rudolph Schindler (1887-1953) to leave Vienna and join them in Chicago. He designed and engineered for them from 1915-19, before moving on to Frank Lloyd Wright. The smooth and flat front of the OSR Elks Club Building (1916), 180 West Washington Street, Chicago, is said to be Schindlerian. See back cover for his 1915 hotel design.

December 1914. The Western Architect gave many pages with many photos (including the one at lower right) to Ottenheimer and partners Issac Stern and William Reichert, with the latter writing for the architects. He doesn't say much about the three as individuals, except that they do "first sketches and designs," but then accept "the influence of associates



Harris House: open first-floor from formal dining room to living room, with Portage Lake outside right. Prairie-arts and crafts-style beamed ceiling painted pale. dma



Ottenheimer Stern Reichert: Bungalow for Ray Bumstead, Palos Park, Illinois. Western Architect, December 1914.

Ottenheimer in Chicago, Liebert in Hancock, Luxfer in Houghton

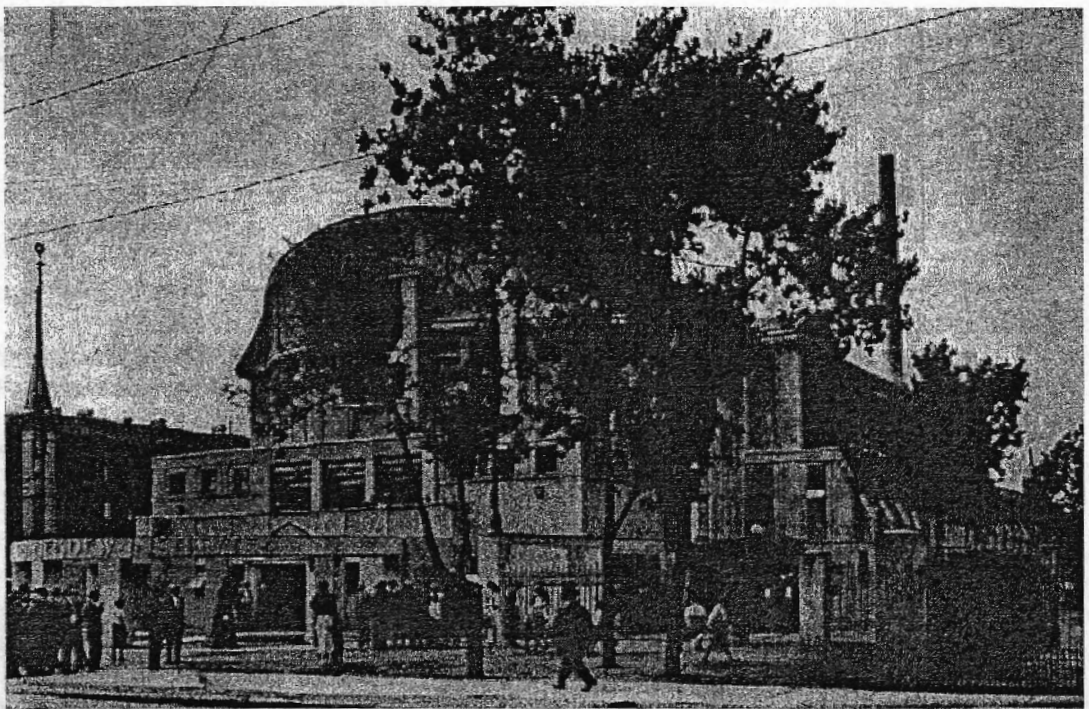
and even assistant designers." Reichert says the firm's style comes from early 20th century Germany and "forms with which they (OSR) were familiar."

In WA, December 1914, Jewish People's Institute.

Founded in 1903, the institute was a social center encouraging education, physical welfare and civic interest. In 1912, Henry Ottenheimer's brother Moses was among the directors. In 1914, the OSR-designed gymnasium and natatorium was being built.

1919. Ottenheimer, 51, died from pneumonia May 11, 1919. His Chicago Tribune obituary mentioned his work at the 1893 Chicago world's fair, his memberships in the Standard, Lake Shore Country, Buena Shore and Chicago Elks clubs. He and Mary had no children. He was buried at Rosehill cemetery after 2 p.m. services in the Rosehill chapel.

Sources: Book of Chicagoans, 1909, 1911. Chicago Blue Book, 1916. History of the Jews of Chicago. Ottenheimer obituaries, May 15-16, 1919, Chicago Tribune. AIA Guide to Chicago. Sullivanesque. Withey, deceased architects.



Ottenheimer's Euro-affect gymnasium for the Jewish Peoples Institute (1914). Jews of Chicago.



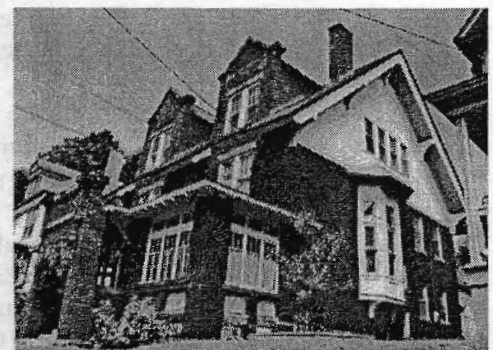
Moses
Ottenheimer.

Lacking a photo of Henry Ottenheimer, we offer this one of his younger brother Moses (1875-?) who was a member of the firm of L. Ottenheimer Sons, dealers in investment securities. We're guessing Henry and Moses looked alike.

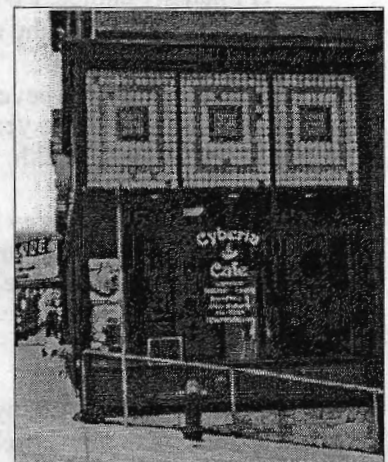
Source: History of the Jews of Chicago.

Also in H-H

1. Architect Hans Liebert, later in Wausau, Wisconsin, and Milwaukee, built his own house in Hancock, a couple of blocks from the Harris House. The owner is the son of the Harris House owners. 2. Ottenheimer's Shelden-Dee Block has its original Luxfer prism glass, some with a Wright design.



Above, Liebert House (1908), Hancock, photographed uphill. Below, Shelden-Dee Block prism glass, Houghton. dma



GROWING INTO IT—THE O. J. HAGER HOUSE

Architect: Robert C. Spencer, Jr.

by Mary Jane White

To see It

The house is prominent.

Noticeable in passing.

Even as it stands now, with its corners sunk in three-storied evergreens, its off-center front terrace buried in a double-bed of yews and a further outer spread of some berried plant, with leaves that go bronze in the fall—still, it remains noticeably massive and large.

A brick mass, cut and crossed with high and low courses of ornamental limestone, with short verticals. Mass supports its stucco outcropping, its cut casement bands of glass.

There is nothing decorative about it.

Mass is overwhelmingly its impression.

A masculine mass.

Set in a small Iowa town of white siding—wood changing to aluminum and vinyl—it will catch your eye every time you drive in and out of town, past the fairgrounds, on the way and back to the Mississippi.

Again, as you travel to and from the Effigy Mounds, raised by vanished early peoples.

I noticed it in passing, and passed it by many times, because, I suppose, I was not shopping.

Then came the time I was shopping.

Only just because a beautiful home had come on the market.

A special home, by a fine architect, George Washington Maher, from Chicago.

A home our town calls the “sister house.” Meaning the “sister” to what is now my house, the O. J. Hager House.

I went with the realtor to see the “sister,” by appointment.

“Sister house” proved to be a feminine house, with many woods—mahogany, walnut, birch, oak—and with opalescent poppies in the art glass, in the doorway and the central stairwell.

I went twice.

A good sign for the realtor, a real prospect for the seller.

This “sister” would be a stretch, a financial challenge. I made plans to make an offer.

I was confessing to the realtor that I would.

And then I saw it. Stepping into the car, with the realtor.

I pointed it out.

Until I pointed it out, I hadn't seen it the way I saw it—as a possibility.

Not a real possibility. My comment was simply wistful, made in passing.

“If I had my choice, I'd make my offer on that one. It. The brick mass. On the corner.”

“Ah, yes,” admired the realtor, “that one will never be for sale.” If it were, I could never afford it.

Crisis intervened. I never made my offer on the poppies.

Crisis consumed two years of my life, and every penny of my money.

It was a crisis of health, and it was my child.

As life returned, energy burgeoned out of the triumph over crisis.

Now, anything could happen.

What else would I make happen?

To enter It

By personal whispers, by telephone, I heard the woman of the house might ready to sell.

The man would never sell.

Robert Spencer's Hager House in Waukon, Iowa

Still, I wanted to see it, at least to get inside it.

So, I called.

I asked the woman of the house, a woman whom I did not know, if I could see it. By appointment.

My son, then 7, went with me.

He said it was like walking into a church.

I whispered to him, "If we ever live here, you will always have to behave as if you were in church. Behave."

The woman of the house welcomed us cautiously into her church.

Whose interior walls were white. Every wall we saw.

The washy color of fear.

A fear of color. The same that stopped me from ever painting, that moved me on to being this writer.

That first day, we only got to see a little of it.

Just the living room. Just the fireplace. Just our favorite room in the house, where we live, and eat off the coffee table, watch our news and cartoons, and put up our Christmas tree.

I could not get a price. I got a ballpark.

We asked to come back. It took a while before we got an invitation.

As I recall, the second time we got no further than the glazed-over terrace at the back door.

The woman of the house could not walk, and was seated there.

Surgery on her foot.

We met the man of the house. I glimpsed the dining room, over his shoulder. He was very gracious, of course, but unyielding. A tall white-haired patrician, a retired professor.

So wonderfully solicitous of his hobbled wife.

I was jealous, and frustrated.

It did not look possible. It was for sale, at a huge price. And only maybe.

To inspect It

Kevin and Donna Schmidt, The House Recyclers, my son and I came to the doorway, to the front terrace.

We stood under a low stucco outcropping—a second floor nursery, as it turned out.

We stood between two limestone columns supporting the stucco.

Those columns' capitals were not classically ornamented; they were carved with a double row of tulips. A band of buds, below a band of stone cups.

We were permitted to enter, to walk through the whole house, once, briefly, room after room, all white, all with stunning windows.

Later I would count ninety-nine pieces of metal bar ornamental glass. Windows, bookcases, a sideboard, a bath cabinet.

Even the attic windows.

Even the garage.

Every metal bar window in the house proper carried a central medallion and a border of acid green glass.

Cracked clear glass that looked like winter ice, or falling rain.

Or sleet, a pebbled opalescent white.

A bronzed opaque black.

A little real green

A little pale yellow.

In every medallion—some tulip.

On the first floor, every tulip was open, and alone.

On the staircase, and upstairs, the tulips came in groups of three, all black buds, breaking through a curved crust of snow.

Robert Spencer's Hager House in Waukon, Iowa

To purchase It

My work began on raising the down payment, an amount equal to the whole price of the best of any home I had owned earlier—an 1853 Norwegian log house on a river bottom acreage—an in-town, restored Victorian in its 1980s scheme of hunter green, dusty pink and silly powder blue, with its similar garden.

The woman of the house began her work on the man of the house.

His uncle, a German carpenter, had been its general contractor in 1907-1908. So, there was an attachment. To be broken.

Fortunately, her work took some months—all the months necessary to my earning the down payment. No realtor entered in.

The man of the house's price was set. In stone.

His price paid. Not by me, of course, but by a sweet Bank.

The price has proved a bargain, but at the time, five years ago, it felt like swallowing an elephant.

To empty It

Now it comes to me, my white elephant.

It comes with a renter, a teacher.

It comes with four kitchens and five bathrooms.

It comes as four apartments. My son and I can only afford to live in one of them—the downstairs.

My son sleeps in the library, a north room with no closet.

I sleep in the old kitchen, another north room, with no heat.

No heat because in a proper kitchen of 1907-1908 a stove burned all day. There was hot water at the ready, in its reservoir.

That stove is gone. I have three electric stoves I won't ever use.

The furnace emits a dangerously high level of carbon monoxide. We live from October to April, through a first winter of open windows.

The attic—the crow's nest—is empty.

The maid's room is occupied—Do Not Enter—my renter's storage flickers under a loopy neon ring, serviced by a run of stapled conduit.

My son, the renter and I are in the basement, waiting out a tornado warning. I broach the subject of buying a house—her own home.

Out with the renter go the extra refrigerators, the many stoves.

To touch It

It stands empty, after eighteen months.

I am afraid to touch it. I am afraid I will hurt it.

I am in awe of it.

I am overawed because it is entrusted to me. I do not own it.

I feel I may never own it.

The roof comes with an asphalt patch. Off with it.

There are roof tiles stacked away in the garage—brittle, probably made with asbestos.

Fireproof. Mr. Hager would have been a young man at the time of the Chicago fire.

These tiles exactly match the ones he put on the roof to protect his children, two little daughters who were born here.

Robert Spencer's Hager House in Waukon, Iowa

Now it is empty enough to touch, to enter the master bedroom and linger.
The room has an octagonal bay of four double casements, a twin to the dining space below.
My son wants this room. I want this room. It is becoming Our House.
We do not always act as if we were in church.

To plan

It comes with all the original architectural drawings.
It comes with the contract specifications, typed out on legal-size onionskin. They are stapled into document covers, as if they were the Last Wills and Testaments they are.
Every owner has kept them.

I learn from the architectural historians that tulips were a favorite motif of Spencer's.
But the town story is that during the spring the house was commissioned, Mrs. Hager, Ella, was asked by Spencer to name her favorite flower and, seeing tulips closest at hand, she told him tulips were her favorite.
Perhaps this story even began with Ella.
Perhaps tulips were her favorite.
Perhaps they grew on her. As the tulips have on me.

Now, I roll Spencer's drawings out, and smooth their blue.
I pin the corners with my favorite paperweights—rocks from the shores of the Great Lakes.
I read all the crackly onionskin, all the amusing recipes for plaster with horsehair, how to tint stucco.
How to lay brick, how to build fireplaces to draw.
The agreed upon penalty to be imposed on any subcontractor caught breaking ornamental glass.

To repair It

My sister is among the first to touch it. I cannot watch. I leave.
While I am gone, she takes a needle-nose plier to the windows.
She breaks out all the clear panes already spider-webbed or shattered.
She pries out globs of old glue and worms of silicone sealer.
She measures for new glass.
Her glasscutter scores the old stock of acid green glass Mr. Hager stored in the basement for repairs.
This is her business. I am fortunate to have a sister who is an art conservator, and is willing to housesit in Iowa between apartments in New York City.
It is summer. She complains of the heat in the house.
After she leaves, I find slivers of glass from the nursery, still on the pavers of the front terrace.

To master It

The first night I sleep upstairs in the master bedroom I find the great octagonal bay holds a perfect view of a single, screaming streetlight.

In 1907, O. J. Hager did not have to endure this as he slept here. Ella did not.
I vow the streetlight will move.
It moves.

I am standing in the street being outrageous—telling on myself—"I get no sleep with that streetlight; you can see it makes me so short-tempered,"—arguing with a uniformed man in the electric truck.

"Why not just hang curtains?"

"Because *that* is ornamental glass up there (pointing); the architect would roll over in his grave—he despised window millinery!"

Who has used the word *millinery* in an argument with this man, ever?

Robert Spencer's Hager House in Waukon, Iowa

How stupid. This is not how I envision myself advocating for the house.
Not how I see myself in church.

So, maybe he does snicker, but the streetlight moseys down the street. To a further pole.
It is hooded with black glass.
The streetlight finds just the right place to be blocked by sliver of solid corner between two casements.

To grow up in It

My twelve year old son walks into his summer dorm room at physics camp. He is sullen. He says it is an ugly room. It is.

He needs to live here, just a week.

He appeals to me pointedly: it has only white walls. This is an argument that should sway me.

They might have put a little color into it.

I sit on the bed. To talk.

I tell him not everyone moves into a dorm spoiled by a beautiful house.

I suggest he buy posters.

I suggest his roommate might bring posters.

I suggest he will *only sleep here*.

I *insist* it will be dark then.

He is not philosophical.

My twelve-year old and his friend are camped on the second story side porch, with the cats.

They are eating up there. They have even dragged up the cat bowls.

Also a spool of kite string, and their colored plastic wheels, with snapping plastic sticks.

One end of the string loops down across the yard to a fence.

There is an elegant second string attached, to facilitate retrieval.

All afternoon the plastic wheels of a changing contraption travel back and forth, up and down, the singing string they call a zip line.

To read in It

There are no proper places in this house for televisions.

All the proper places are taken by fireplaces.

The Hager daughters read and collected Wizard of Oz books.

And, with Ella's prompting, lent them to a neighbor girl, who is now a woman in her late eighties, and remembers the rage.

There has always been some rage, or other.

I take down the latest volume of Harry Potter, to read a chapter aloud to my son.

To live long in It

Now that the renter's entry is closed up. . .

Now that the stairway is opened. . .

Now that the hallway is free of odd doors. . .

Now that the doors are back in their appointed places, and open. . .

Now anywhere I choose to sit in the house, I can see out the windows of other rooms.

In the living room, sitting by the south wall's fireplace, my eye travels easily out the north windows of the library to the cool purple rhododendron each spring.

Seasons of light pass through the windows, as planned.

Evening at Silsbee-Wright Unity Chapel, Halprin, Liebeskind visit Wright sites

The light is different in winter. All the windows change.

From the octagonal bay, from across the dining room, the sun strikes the tiny red iridescent corners of the sideboard's glazed upper cabinet doors.

Behind the table, the central white petal of each open tulip glows like a steady white flame as the sky darkens.

At dusk the glass becomes opaque.

This is the dinner hour, in the western dining room.

My guest and I, seated at table, can look out the flanking lights of the eastern front doorway, and watch those whom we expect to join us, as they approach.

Moving up eastern stairwell past the group of stepped windows, the tips of new buds, the hoods of breaking green, flash their metallic gold overlay. Over the last snow the sun travels there from a bank of three casements in my son's back bedroom.

Each different day, hours of light cross the house.

As drawn.

As imagined.

Wright's neighborhood

Wright & Silsbee by Taliesin

Sitting on hard vintage wood chairs in the Unity Chapel recently, we heard Eau Claire (WI) writer Max Garland ask whether everyone could hear. He was one of the readers at the opening of the 2003 Spring Green Literary Festival. Everyone said they could hear, and Garland thanked or credited Wright for that. The exterior of the chapel was designed by Joseph Lyman Silsbee in 1886, and 19-year-old Wright, who would work for Silsbee in Chicago, "looked after" the interior. The space is plain, geometrically marked on the ceiling, almost severe, but relaxing. Built for Wright's relatives, the Lloyd Jones family, the chapel is owned by the family, returned to them by Taliesin. Sitting next to us and looking frail was Maxine Pfefferkorn, wife of architect Jim Pfefferkorn. Born in Augusta, Wisconsin, and now in his early 80s, Pfefferkorn was a Taliesin apprentice for Frank Lloyd Wright and stayed, after Wright's death in 1959, until 1972. The Pfefferkorns live near Spring Green at "Iterra" (b. 1973), a house he designed and completed over four or five years. Iterra means "lighted earth," Pfefferkorn told me (dma) when I visited him there in 2002. Architectural history lives at all times at Taliesin and its neighborhood.

Sources: Frank Lloyd Wright & the Prairie School in Wisconsin, Kristin Visser, *Prairie Oak Press*, Madison, 1992. Various websites. Thanks to Minerva Montooth at Taliesin.

Looking around

- **Lawrence Halprin**, 87, the top landscape architect of the second half of the 20th century, credits his career to a visit to Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin near Spring Green. Here from a New York Times story of July 10, 2003, is an explanation: "It was (Mrs.) Anna (Halprin), whom Mr. Halprin met at the University of Wisconsin (Madison) in 1939, who encouraged a weekend trip to Taliesin East (sic), a studio of Frank Lloyd Wright's. It changed his life. In Wright's studio he recognized his calling, switching from plant science to 'environments human beings occupy.'"

- In 1969, architect **Daniel Libeskind** and Nina Lewis, newly married, were planning a trip to the Caribbean, she recalls in a New Yorker story (September 15, 2003), "but Daniel had got a travel scholarship to see the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, and that became our honeymoon. Neither of us could drive, so we went with two other students. One was a strict Lutheran, the other a Jehovah's Witness, and neither of them was what you would call loose and easy. We camped out in sleeping bags in a station wagon."

- **Marshall Erdman**, the Madison (WI) builder who died in 1995, friend and collaborator with Frank Lloyd Wright, is the subject of a new book commissioned by his family. Among the hundreds at a book signing in September was politician and environmentalist Gaylor Nelson who wrote the foreword for *Uncommon Sense: the Life of Marshall Erdman*, the rest of which is by Doug Moe and Alice D'Alessio.

Miscellaneous wonders, on to Kearsarge, Michigan

About books, places, etc.

Book: Asmara: Africa's Secret Modernist City

A book due from Merrell on Asmara, Eritrea, a living museum of 1930s deco architecture. For a preview, see the New York Times House&Home section of September 11, 2003.



Racine County Visitor center just off I-94. Homage to Wright by architect Ken Dahlin of Racine. Completed 2000. Left, inside & photo of Wright in Taliesin drawing room. dma

Painting: Seth Peterson Cottage
Mount Horeb (WI) artist Jeff Hagen has painted the Peterson Cottage (Wright, 1958) as a tribute to Audrey Laatsch, the savior of the cottage who died in 2002. He calls the painting (in color on back cover) "Audrey's Star." Limited edition copies are for sale by the Seth Peterson Cottage Conservancy, Box 334, Lake Delton WI

53940. The money will be used for a cottage endowment fund. Upcoming tour dates for the cottage on Mirror Lake near Wisconsin Dells are October 12, November 9, December 14, all Sundays.

Photos: Edward Weston

Edward Weston (1886-1958) got his first camera, a Kodak Bull's Eye No.2, from his father while living in Highland Park, Illinois. Current Weston exhibition: Through October 19, "Edward Weston: Life Work," Portland (ME) Museum of Art. 207-775-6148.

Communications

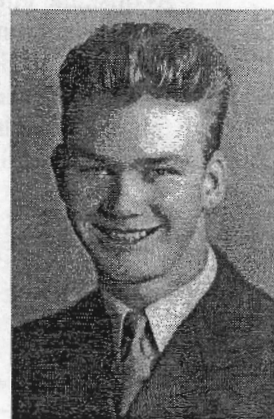
Email from a reader in Platteville WI July 27, 2003: "Just two weeks ago members of our old house group met at the home of ___ and ___ in Lena, Illinois. ___ had one entire wall of photos of his grandfather Schwalbe who 'built La Crosse.' I just took a second look at Prairie today and picked up on the mention there..."

Email from a reader in larger Chicago July 28, 2003: "Just finished reading Issue 3. Enjoyed the articles on Buck and (Robert) Spencer especially. Have you ever seen a photo of Lawrence Buck..." Answer: No. I'm looking. Dreamt that I have.

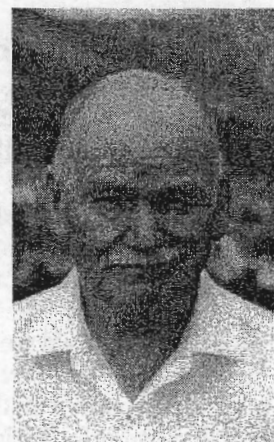
Hendrickson's peninsula dream

Time to time, Prairie will reach beyond notable architects to people taken by contemporary excellence and committed to making their own version. Between 1950 and the 1980s in tiny Kearsarge, a copper mine village in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, Paul Hendrickson, 80, of Sedona, Arizona, created a restaurant unlike all others in the U.P. His first model was an A&W he liked in his hometown Waukegan, Illinois. Later, Hendrickson

was influenced by modernism and Frank Lloyd Wright and the Prairie style. We'll let a brochure he commissioned in 1975 to sell for \$1 each in the restaurant tell most of his story. Added is this: "You know at night when everybody had gone home, I'd cook up a good burger, sit in the first booth in the Enchanted Room. I'd sit there after everybody had left, and I was enthralled by it all by myself." Those comments tell much, and you'll know why after reading the brochure. With new owners, the third since Hendrickson sold his restaurant in 1985, the Hut remains open.
DMA



Above, high school. Below, 2002.





Touring

George Maher's Otto and Grace Hager House (1911), shown in this postcard from the Lowe-Laiblin collection, will be open for touring in Waukon, Iowa, October 12. 1-4 p.m. \$10. Sponsored by Allamakee County Economic Development, others. 800-824-1424. areadvlp@acegroup.cc

See more p. 12 on Waukon's Hager House by Spencer.

Basic plus: From Sullivanesque

"Another Chicago architect, George Washington Maher (1864-1926), created his own distinct interpretation of Sullivanesque and Wrightian imagery. Maher's John Farson House (1897) in Oak Park and the James Patten House (1901; demolished) in Evanston were most consistent with Sullivanesque ornamentation. The more modest Frank Scheidenhelm House (1902) in Wilmette had restrained ornament for porch columns and dormer trim. In a small store and office structure called the University Building (1905-06), in Evanston, the influence may have moved in the reverse direction. The building had columns with squared-off capitals ornament that may have influenced Sullivan's design of the interior of his bank in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Maher used moldings and incised lines to complement the restrained ornament of the dressed limestone exterior. He employed similar stonework for the Swift Hall of Engineering (1909) at Northwestern University, Evanston. There, however, Maher utilized vertical ornamental features to flank the entry portals while smaller ornamental design devices adorned



George W. Maher

two piers that separated the three distinct openings. Maher used similar design devices at the J.R. Watkins Medical Products (1911) complex in Winona, Minnesota. Maher's favorite botanical themes were based on the poppy and the thistle. Maher developed his own identifiable style from elements of the Sullivanesque, the Prairie School, and the arts and crafts movement. Although he factored in historical eclecticism later in his career, he was a creative force in Chicago. Maher has remained understudied and mostly unappreciated."

Notes. University of Illinois Professor Ronald Schmidt, author of *Sullivanesque*, uses the unprogressive naming of houses after their male owners, rather than male and female owners. We search for spouse names and recently found Gertrude Lamborn in



Lamborn House. Western Architect, March 1910.

the 1910 U.S. Census. She was the wife of Dr. William H. Lamborn. Their Maher house (c. 1908) is in Highland Park, Illinois. He was 36, she 44 when the recorder visited May 10, 1910. Living with them were three daughters and the 76-year-old mother of Gertrude or William.

For sale/sold/newly owned

Kenilworth, Illinois

The wonderful Parmalee House at 512 Roslyn Road built about 1896 is offered at \$1,895,000. The house originally had a Tudor arch motif throughout.

Oak Park, Illinois

• The 1905 Erwin House is for sale for \$1,250,000. B&W realty. www.bairdwarner.com. Note from a reader in the Chicago area: "It will be interesting to see what happens to the Erwin house." Comment:



Among the descendants of the Erwins is Wisconsin artist Charles Munch who lives in the greater Spring Green area.

• Near the Erwin House, Maher's 1912 Taylor House at 405 North Euclid Avenue is for sale for \$1,250,000.

St. Davids, Pennsylvania

Two of the three Maher houses have new owners. They are the Stewart

houses (both 1893) at 502 and 510 St. Davids Avenue. Both were built for Charles H. Stewart, who had some family connection to the Mahers.

Wausau, Wisconsin

The Gilbert House (1894), one of the best-kept of the older Maher houses, sold. The house shows above.

Maher/family calendar

• *Continuing.* Tours, Yawkey House Museum. Classical-style mansion (1900-01) designed by Milwaukee architects Henry J. Van Ryn and Gerrit de Gelleke, remodeled in 1907-08 by George Maher. Built-ins, oak forest mural in den, oak-motif art glass window, likely by Tiffany Studios, and lantern-shape lights. First owners: Cyrus and Alice (Richardson) Yawkey, parents of Leigh Yawkey Woodson, whose Maher-designed house (1913-14) is across the street and is headquarters and library for the Marathon County Historical Society, 410 McIndoe Street, Wausau. Exhibition: "Off to Work We Go: Local Workers Tell Their Stories, through May 2004. 715-842-5750.

• *Through October 13.* Pieces by George Maher's brother-in-law, the sculptor Hermon MacNeil, are in "Window on the West, Chicago and the Art of the New Frontier," at the Art Institute of Chicago. MacNeil's works are "Moqui Runner," "Sun Vow," "Vow of Vengeance." MacNeil's companions traveling west included Hamlin Garland born in West Salem, Wisconsin.

Maher places

Wausau & Wisconsin Trails

Writer Laura Kearney of the Black Earth (WI)-based magazine visited and stayed in the Stewart Inn, which is Wausau's 1905 house for Hiram and Irene Stewart. She much liked it. She wrote: "Maher had worked in Joseph Lyman Silsbee's Chicago architectural firm alongside Frank Lloyd Wright, and later also would become an advocate of the Prairie School style." The story in the October 2003 issue (pp. 40-41)

OPEN SUN 1-3

Oak Park, 530 N Euclid \$1,250,000
Historic Erwin House 14+ rooms-7 bds 5.1 baths.
Deco Ideas will re-establish as grand mansion.
100x175 lot elegant & gracious ID# 03192390

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by noted architect, George Maher.

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is an informed architectural guide to Maher.

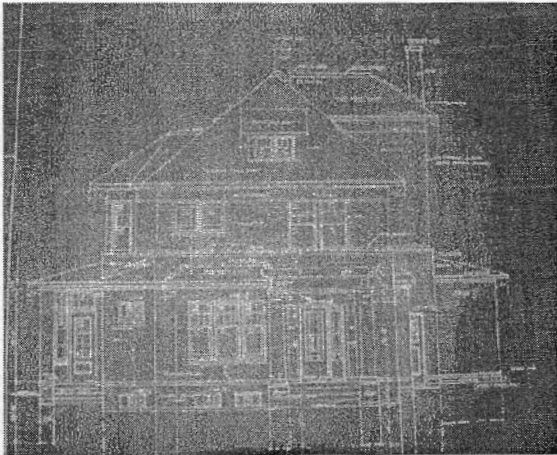
Kenilworth's other side of the tracks

The west side of Kenilworth, the part that once was greened by the North Shore Golf Club with a George Maher clubhouse (1917, dem.) hasn't been much studied. That became apparent in a recent teardown controversy about a house at 574 Earlston Road (Frank Cawley, architect). Opponents searched for architectural evidence.

More
Philip
Maher
coming



Beyond Prairie Central



Harris House in Hancock, Michigan

STANDARD CLUB		
516		
Newman A. B.	Rosenthal E. M.	Silberman H. S.
Newman E. M.	Rosenthal Kurt	Silberman Sign
Newman Harry B.	Rosenthal Lessing	Simon Carl S.
Newman Jacob	Rosenthal L. L.	Simon David S.
Newman Julius C.	Rosenthal Samuel	Sloes Jacob M.
Norden Adolph C.	Rosenwald Julius	Snydacker A. A.
Nurbaum Aaron E.	Rosenwald M. S.	Spiegel Arthur
Nussbaum Bert	Rothschild Alfred J.	Spiegel Modie
Nussbaum Wm.	Rothschild Ben	Spiegel Sidney
Oberndorf M. L.	Rothschild Emil	Spiesberger S.
Oppenheimer Alfred	Rothschild Felix	Spitz Joel
Oppenheimer Ben	Rothschild Jesse A.	Spitz M. W.
Oppenheimer H. D.	Rothschild Maurice	Spitz Samuel
Oppenheimer Julius	L.	Steele S. B.
Otteneimer Henry	Rothschild Melville	Stein Albert
L.	N.	Stein Charles
		Stein D. A.

In 1909, the Chicago architects Ottenheimer Stern Reichert designed a house for father and son Samuel and John Harris. Above are the front and side elevations from the owner's collection. At left is a page from the Chicago Blue Book of 1916, showing Henry Ottenheimer's membership in the Standard Club for Jewish men. Sears owner Julius Rosenwald was a member, too. *More inside, pages 7-11.*

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